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ARIZONA-SONORA BORDER MASTER PLAN

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2012

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are working closely with the State of Sonora, Mexico, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores), the Ministry of Communications and Transportation (Secretaria de Comunicaciones y Transportes), and several other local, state and federal agencies to develop an Arizona-Sonora Border Master Plan (BMP).

The need for an integrated transportation master plan to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of cross-border traffic prompted this collaborative effort. Arizona has a total of nine Land Ports of Entry (LPOE) along its border with Mexico. In 2010, more than 23 million people were processed through these border crossings. At each LPOE, heavy congestion and security issues affect daily pedestrian, commercial and vehicular traffic.

Upon completion, the BMP will include a prioritized list of recommended Arizona-Sonora border related infrastructure projects and document their readiness for funding and implementation. The BMP study area extends along the entire Arizona-Sonora border, which incorporates a wide range of international jurisdictions, including federal, tribal, state, county and city governments on both sides of the border.



Consultant project manager Bill Ferris speaks with a breakout group at a recent Technical Working Group meeting in Nogales, Ariz.

WHEN?

The study kicked off in fall 2011 and is scheduled for completion in late 2012. The workplan below shows the tasks and proposed schedule for the study process.

JAN 2012

- Technical Memo #1: *Existing Conditions*
- Technical Memo #2: *Land Port of Entry Focus Review*
- Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting, San Luis, Ariz.

FEB 2012

- Working Paper #1: *Existing and Future Conditions*
- Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting, Puerto Peñasco, Sonora
- TWG Meeting, Nogales, Ariz.
- Study Website Launched

MARCH 2012

- Coordination Meeting, Mexico City (SRE/SCT)
- PAC Meeting, Tucson, Ariz.

APRIL 2012

- Travel Demand Model - Analyses
- Newsletter

MAY 2012

- Technical Memo #3: *Deficiencies and Alternatives*
- Technical Memo #4: *Interim Conditions*
- TWG Meeting, Nogales, Ariz.
- Focus Group, Nogales, Ariz.

JUNE 2012

- PAC Meeting, Tucson, Ariz.
- Newsletter

JULY 2012

- TWG Meeting, Location TBD
- Focus Group, Location TBD

AUG 2012

- Working Paper #2: *Phased Implementation Plan*
- PAC Meeting, Location TBD
- Focus Group, Location TBD

SEPT/OCT 2012

- Draft Master Plan
- PAC Meeting, Location TBD
- TWG Meeting, Location TBD

NOV 2012

- Final Master Plan
- Newsletter
- Study Concludes

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The Technical Working Group (TWG) for the Arizona-Sonora Border Master Plan (BMP) has the unenviable task of completing the BMP by the end of the year, elevating the Plan to the same level of completedness as comparable studies in California, New Mexico and Texas. The TWG met Feb. 16, 2012, in Nogales, Ariz., to finalize the categories of criteria to be used in assessing projects for consideration under the Plan.

This was the third meeting of the TWG, following a Dec. 13, 2011, kick-off meeting held jointly with the Arizona-Sonora BMP Policy Advisory Committee (PAC). Attendees came from Mexico City, Hermosillo, Nogales, San Luis Rio Colorado and Agua Prieta, Mexico, as well as Washington, D.C., San Francisco and Phoenix, Tucson, Yuma, Nogales and Douglas, Ariz.

The categories of criteria include:

- Capacity/Congestion
- Cost Effectiveness
- Regional Benefit
- Project Readiness
- LPOE Connectivity (non-LPOE projects only)
- Binational Coordination/Commitment (LPOE projects only)

PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Arizona-Sonora BMP study began in Fall 2011 and is scheduled for completion in late 2012. The planning process involves the following five major phases:

- Project initiation – Includes the creation of a PAC and TWG to ensure stakeholder involvement
- Existing and future conditions – Data is collected from various sources and reviewed
- Identification of operational and infrastructure needs – The needs of all the LPOE's, rail and roadways/bridges are identified and analyzed
- Evaluation and prioritization of potential LPOE and transportation projects
- Draft and final report preparation



Agriculture workers line up at the San Luis I, Land Port of Entry for the early morning rush from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m.

DID YOU KNOW?

Nogales is the largest gateway for fresh produce from Mexico, accounting for 50 percent of all fruits and vegetables shipped into the United States. Each day, millions of dollars in cross-border trade and tourism pass through the following Arizona-Sonora Ports of Entry

- San Luis, Ariz. – San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora
- Lukeville, Ariz. – Sonoyta, Sonora
- Sasabe, Ariz. – El Sasabe, Sonora
- Nogales, Ariz. – Nogales, Sonora
- Naco, Ariz., – Naco, Sonora
- Douglas, Ariz. – Agua Prieta, Sonora

FOCUS SESSIONS

Focus group feedback sessions are being scheduled for Nogales, San Luis and Douglas. For more information on focus group sessions, please contact any member of the study team.

STAY INFORMED!

Throughout the duration of the study, stakeholder information will be compiled and tracked through a database. The database will be used to track comments and the distribution of information, notifications and study updates. If you wish to be included in the stakeholder database and receive updates, please email alice@gordleygroup.com. Because the study encompasses stakeholders on both sides of the border, all meetings will be conducted in English and Spanish.

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PHASE 1, PROJECT INITIATION (COMPLETED):

A workplan was developed that included an overview of the stakeholder process and a summary of activities for each task. The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and Technical Working Group (TWG) were established.

The PAC consists of 47 executive level managers from participating stakeholder agencies. The PAC is responsible for providing BMP project team direction and final approval of all project parameters and criteria.

The TWG also consists of 55 participating stakeholder agency senior staff. The TWG is tasked with providing requested technical data and infrastructure operations information. They are also involved in making recommendations to the PAC. Both the PAC and the TWG will meet regularly throughout the BMP development to contribute detailed information to this study.

PHASE 2, ASSESS EXISTING, FUTURE CONDITIONS (UNDER WAY):

Data collection and review began in late 2011 and continues through early 2012. Information on existing conditions in the study area was gathered and data related to future conditions is under development. An inventory of information for each LPOE regarding operations and infrastructure was completed.

PHASE 3, ANALYZE DATA (UNDER WAY):

The identification of potential challenges that may arise within the border-related transportation networks (roadways, rail and LPOE) and development of the BMP will lead to the identification of possible improvement strategies. The goal is to develop a list of planned and potential future transportation projects along the border, ultimately developing a prioritization plan.

PHASES 4 AND 5, EVALUATE LPOE, RELATED PROJECTS AND DRAFT AND FINALIZE BMP (PENDING)

Criteria for evaluation and ranking of future LPOE and related transportation projects will be developed for each travel mode. The prioritization criteria developed and approved by the PAC will be applied to project lists identified in Phase 3. The BMP will be compiled and drafted for review and comment by the TWG. When the TWG is ready to recommend approval to the PAC, the final BMP will be presented to the PAC in late 2012.

Binational Stakeholder Involvement

The involvement of stakeholders on both sides of the border is critical. The approach to stakeholder involvement will evolve throughout the study to ensure that stakeholders are being informed and their input is reaching the study team. This is the first of three newsletters that will be emailed to stakeholders. Stakeholders will be kept up-to-date through focus group meetings, a study website (www.azdot.gov/azborderplan) and fact sheets. Additional feedback will be solicited through comment forms and emails.

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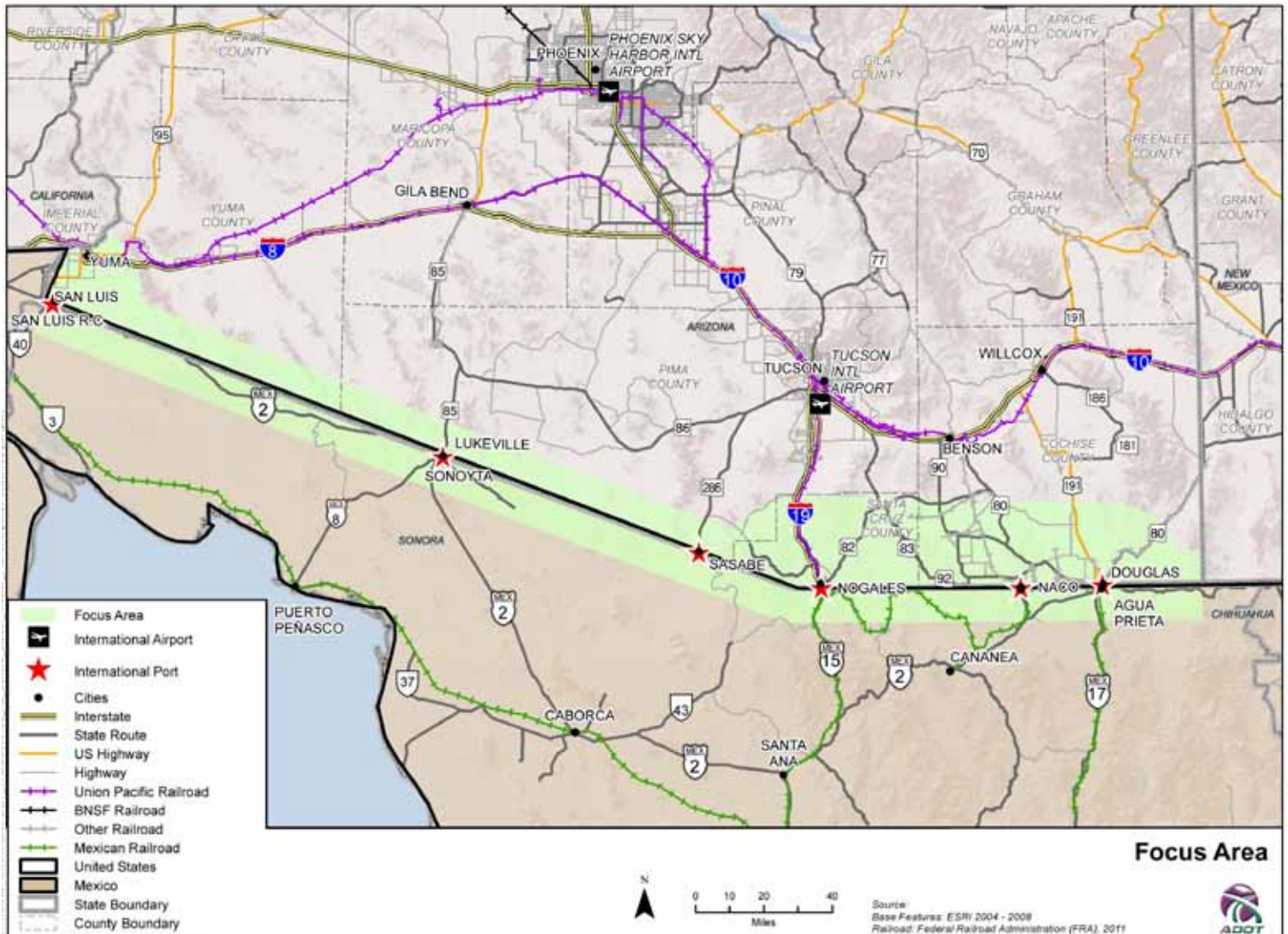
MEDIA INQUIRIES

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MASTER PLAN FOCUS AREA MAP

THE ARIZONA BORDER IS 389 MILES LONG AND THE STUDY EVALUATES SIX LAND PORTS OF ENTRY AND NINE TOTAL CROSSINGS BETWEEN ARIZONA AND SONORA.



DISTRIBUTIONS OF SONORA-TO-ARIZONA CROSSINGS BY MODE (AVERAGE 2006 - 2010)

